

CLASSIFICATION S-E-C-R-E-T

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY

East Germany/USSR

DATE DISTR. 13 June 1955

SUBJECT

Karl Guenther Zimmer, German Returnee from
the USSR

NO. OF PAGES 4

PLACE
ACQUIRED

**NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)**

25X1

DATE OF INFO.

**SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.**

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. K. G. Zimmer learned on the occasion of his return to East Germany that returning scientists ordinarily were sent to a reception center in Leipzig.¹ However, he applied for permission to go to Berlin, which was granted. He was received by three representatives of the East German Education Ministry at the station in East Berlin. He made it clear to them that he wanted to visit his mother [redacted] immediately. He encountered difficulties at first, and he had to press his request. He was finally given permission and he went [redacted] there. On this occasion, Zimmer remarked that quite obviously the Soviet authorities were generally not opposed to plans of returning scientists to see relatives [redacted] The East German authorities, however, in contrast to the attitude of the Soviets, raised objections to such plans.²
2. Zimmer was shipped to the USSR together with Hans Born and Alexander Catsch. Prior to their shipment, the men were first jailed in Berlin. Subsequently, they were flown to Moscow and thrown into the Lublyanka Prison, where they received good treatment. After some time they were transferred to a prisoner of war camp near Moscow. Later, they were asked whether they wanted to work with Nikolaus Riehl. They answered in the affirmative and joined Riehl in Moscow-Elektrostal. During their stay there, they did "practically nothing", as Zimmer expressed it. Zimmer busied himself with translating into Russian a book written by Riehl on power circuits (Energieleitungen). He also wrote a book himself on radiation dosimetry. He turned over the manuscripts of the translation as well as his own book to the Soviet authorities and has never heard of them since. However, he believes that the Russian translation

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of Riehl's book was published.

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4. After about a year's stay in Elektrostal,³ Zimmer, Born and Catsch were asked whether they wanted to work with Nikolai Timofeev-Ressovsky. The three men knew Timofeev from his former work in the Institute for Brain Research. Upon agreeing, they were transferred to Timofeev, who worked at that time in an institute on a peninsula [redacted]

[redacted] They stayed there for several years. They were later joined by Riehl, who was also transferred there (probably in 1948, or later).

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5. Zimmer gave the following story of the fate of Timofeev-Ressovsky. After his arrival in the USSR, he was sentenced to 12 years hard labor and taken to a penal camp in [redacted] Kazakhstan. During his stay there, Timofeev lost his eyesight because of vitamin deficiency. This fact caused the Soviet authorities to transfer him to Moscow for treatment after he had stayed two years in the labor camp. In Moscow, Timofeev regained some of his sight, but he never was able to read again. After the treatment, Timofeev was transferred to Sungul, where he was put in charge of one of two institutes which were there under the supervision of a Russian professor [redacted]

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6. In Sungul, Timofeev, Zimmer, Born and Catsch did work very much along the lines they had previously followed together in the Berlin-Buch Institute for Brain Research. In particular, they engaged in genetics research on *Drosophila melanogaster*. This work progressed well until Lysenko started his well-known campaign against the [redacted] genetics. The genetics experiments of the Sungul research team were then prohibited. The men stayed there for some time, again doing "practically nothing".

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7. When the German team left Sungul, Timofeev was still there. Zimmer, however, knew that later he was given the direction of an institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences at an unspecified location in the Ural mountains. [redacted] Zimmer remarked that although apparently the material conditions of Timofeev's situation have improved, he is still

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the object of heavy attacks which periodically appear against him both in Soviet scientific publications and in Pravda. In this connection, Zimmer also denied [redacted] that Lysenko has been completely disgraced and his theory abandoned in the USSR. According to Zimmer, this is not quite so. Although Lysenko is no longer the "fashionable" theoretician, he is still an important factor in Soviet biology. Genetics research is still prohibited in the USSR.

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8. Zimmer, Riehl, Born and Catsch were transferred from Sugul to Sukhumi, where they stayed for about two years or more prior to their return to Germany. In Sukhumi, they were left very much to themselves and could, for the first time, engage in work which they wanted to do. They had adequate housing, literature and equipment. According to Zimmer, Riehl engaged in germanium research in Sukhumi and quite generally in research on semi-conductors and phosphorus. Zimmer himself was mainly engaged in research on scintillation crystals for scintillation counters. Zimmer knew that the papers completed by the Germans in Sukhumi have not yet been published.

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10. Zimmer gave the following indications on other German scientists (as of 11 April 1955):

- a. Robert Doepel accepted a professorship in Voronezh and will not return to Germany.
- b. Heinz Pose also accepted a professorship at an unspecified location and will not return.
- c. Karl-Heinz Riewe, [redacted] is in jail after having been sentenced to 10 years for "disturbance of the labor peace" (Bruch des Arbeitsfriedens). The infraction actually committed by Riewe was that he complained against restrictions on the movements of German scientists in the USSR. [redacted]
- d. Karl-Friedrich Weiss is in Leipzig.
- e. Helene Kuelz is in Leipzig.
- f. Riehl, Born and Catsch are in the Guest House of the East German Academy of Sciences at Zeuthen, under heavy surveillance.

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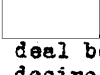

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1.  Comment. Probably the Continental Hotel.

2.  Comment. It is of course possible that this is an arranged deal between the Soviets and the East Germans. The Soviets seem to desire to appear generous, while at the same time they may have instructed the East Germans to issue prohibitions against travel  by the scientists concerned.

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



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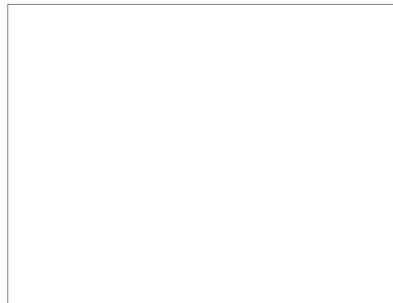
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